Scheme in various States in the Ninth Plan?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU: (a) to (d) Million Wells Scheme (MWS) was launched as a sub-scheme of National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) during 1988-89. On 1.4.1989 NREP and RLEGP were merged and Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) launched. Million Wells Scheme continued as sub-scheme of JRY upto 31.12.1995. It is now being implemented as an independent scheme w.e.f. 1.1.1996. The objective of Million Wells Scheme is to provide assistance '--construction of irrigation sources and land development, free of cost for the poor small and marginal farmers belonging to SCs/STs and freed bonded labourers. From 1993-94 Million Wells Scheme has been extended to non SC/ST poor small and marginal farmers also. Million Wells Scheme is being a Centrally sponsored scheme, the funds are shared between Central and State on 80:20 basis. Million Wells Scheme funds are allocated among the districts by the State Government with reference to the unirrigated land with potential for well irrigation and improvement of lands held by the rural poor. The scheme is being implemented all over the country including Orissa. MWS Scheme will be continued during the Ninth Five Years Plan also.

The physical and financial performance under MWS during 1996-97 in respect of Orissa is as under:—

(Rs. in Lakhs)

Total available funds (OB + Funds released)	Expenditure	Wells constructed (in no.)
5049.96	4176.51	18349

Priority to productive employment and land reforms

1643. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission has given the highest priority to generate adequate productive employment with focus on agriculture and emphasis on radical land reforms;

(b) whether he agrees with this policy; and

(c) if so, whether C[oven'ment] are lacking in land reforms and which are the States who are very much behind in land reforms and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU): (a) and (b) The Planning Commission and this ministry have traditionally emphasized issues related to the generation of productive employment and implementation of land reform measures. The Programme of action for land Reforms in the 9th Plan *inter alia* includes the detection/redistribution of ceiling surplus land, tenancy reforms, regular updating of land records, prevention of tribal land alienation and ensuring the access of women and weaker sections of society to land.

(c) It is not **a** fact to say that the Government is lagging in the implementation of Land Reform measures. For example, as a consequence of the enforcement of land ceiling laws, about 74 lakh acres has been declared surplus. Most of this land has been distributed mainly to landless persons belonging to the SC/ST. Substantial progress has also been made in the Consolidation of Holdings and in respect of tenancy reforms.

Contract for the dug wells (o a foreign NGO in Orissa

1644. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in Kalahandi (Orissa) contract for the dug wells has